



IRAN TODAY & TOMORROW

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran (CSRI), a 501(c)(3), non-profit and independent group, is committed to advance change in Iran through an internationally monitored referendum as the only peaceful means to bring democracy and establish a secular and representative government in Iran.

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Nuclear proliferation

Iran importing extra-durable steel for nukes – exile group



AP, July 28 -- PARIS - Iran is violating international agreements by secretly importing an extra-durable steel for use in its nuclear program, an exiled Iranian opposition group alleged Thursday.

Some of the group's past information about Iran's nuclear program has proved accurate. The Iranian government, which says it has no nuclear weapons program, routinely refuses to respond to its allegations from the opposition group. Thursday, the National Council of Resistance of Iran claimed that front companies for the Iranian regime were smuggling in maraging steel, an alloy that withstands high stress and heat and can be used to build centrifuges for uranium enrichment. It also has applications in regular industry. "At present, maraging steel is being smuggled to Iran illegally from other countries," Mohammed Mohaddessin, head of the group's foreign affairs committee, told a news conference in Paris. The group said it did not know exactly how much of the metal was being brought into Iran. It alleged that some of it came from Malaysia and was shipped to the United Arab Emirates before reaching Iran. The Iranian opposition group said research on maraging steel was being conducted at Malek Ashtar University in Tehran and at other scientific centers and that the country was close to producing it. The group said it had informed the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency, of its findings. Melissa Fleming, a spokeswoman for the Vienna-based agency, said its experts "will review the claims to see if there's anything to them." She declined to elaborate. Maraging steel is on a list of goods to be subject to export controls because they could be used for nuclear purposes. If Iran is importing maraging steel, it has a responsibility to disclose it, said Joseph Cirincione of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Should the allegations prove true, Cirincione said, they show that "Iran is still violating its treaty obligations, and that the nuclear black market is alive and well, still supplying these materials to countries that seek them." The opposition group said Iran was also using maraging steel to build nuclear bomb casings. But Cirincione said that using such a tough steel for that purpose was unnecessary.

Mullahs' president says Iran will resume enrichment



AFP, July 27 - Iran will end a suspension of sensitive uranium ore conversion activities regardless of what proposals the European Union makes in the coming days to change its mind, President Mohammad Khatami announced Wednesday. "I

hope that their proposals will, as agreed, allow for the resumption of (conversion) activities at Isfahan," Khatami told reporters, referring to a key nuclear plant in central Iran. "But whether they do or not, we're going to resume the activities at Isfahan," added the outgoing reformist president...Khatami, who hands over office to ultra-conservative Mahmood Ahmadinejad in early August, announced the decision after a cabinet meeting and said it had been taken at an earlier gathering of top leaders of the regime..."America threatens a lot but, with all their worries in Iraq and the world, I think they would never do anything so senseless," Khatami said. "If America were to commit such an error, of course we would have losses but theirs

would be bigger," he said, insisting he had no desire to raise tension with Washington. "My government and I have made all the political, military and economic preparations for any such attack."

Senate cracks down on U.S. Companies dealing with Syria, Iran

Dow Jones Newswire, July 26 - The Senate approved on Tuesday legislation that strengthens penalties against U.S. companies doing business with countries deemed "terrorist states" by the U.S. government. An amendment sponsored by Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, approved as part of the Senate Defense Authorization bill, cracks down on any U.S. company to set up a foreign subsidiary in an attempt to avoid U.S. sanctions under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). "It prevents U.S. corporations from creating a shell company somewhere else in order to do business with rogue, terror-sponsoring nations such as Syria and Iran," Collins said in a statement. "The bottom line is that if a U.S. company is evading sanctions to do business with one of these countries, they are helping to prop up countries that support terrorism - most often aimed against America," she added... Lawmakers have cited subsidiaries of Halliburton Co.(HAL), Conoco Phillips (COP), Cooper Cameron (CAM) and General Electric Co. (GE) as among the companies doing business with nations on a U.S. government list of states accused of sponsoring terrorism. All companies have since broken any ties with Iran.

Tehran's regime buys European made nuclear parts via South Korea

Iran Focus, July 26 - European firms are unknowingly providing Iran with much-needed nuclear parts which could be used in making nuclear bombs despite efforts by the international community to prevent Tehran from acquiring such a capability, the German weekly der Spiegel wrote on Monday. The paper said that it had seen secret documents showing that Iran was secretly buying European-made sophisticated nuclear parts via South Korea. The French firm EADS Sodern was one such company involved in the illegal transactions though it was unaware of the final destination of its exports, the der Spiegel said.

According to the financial records for the deal, Tehran was busy buying 300 units of Nickel 63 (98.720 dollars) from the South Korean Kyung-Do Enterprises through an Iranian company called Partoris.... The second secret deal was to obtain Tritium Targets. This dual-use material can be used inside neutron sources, causing a chain....

It added that Tehran overcomes this barrier by instructing its South Korean partners to purchase the material from the French-based company EADS at \$33,000, a price far higher than the its current value. Tehran then buys the material from the South Korean firms.

Terrorism and meddling in Iraq

Rumsfeld presses Iraq on Syria, Iran



AP, July 27 - US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said Iraqi leaders must take a more aggressive stance against what he called harmful interference from neighboring Syria and Iran. Rumsfeld arrived unannounced in Baghdad on Wednesday with a series of messages for the country's interim leaders...Rumsfeld has often criticized Iran and Syria for meddling in Iraq's affairs. In his remarks on Wednesday, he put the main burden on Iraqi leaders to do more to

fix the problem. "They need to be aggressively communicating with their neighbors to see that foreign terrorists stop coming across those borders and that their neighbors do not harbor insurgents and finance insurgents," he said... Rumsfeld singled out Syria and Iran as troublemakers for the fledging government in Baghdad. The future course of their relations will help determine when Iraq will be stable enough to fight the "insurgency" on its own, he said. "Their efforts to destabilize the situation in Iraq: Does it increase or decrease?" he asked.

Radical cleric advertises for recruiting of suicide bombers



The Media Line, July 26 - The spiritual guide of Iran's president-elect Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad, Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi Mu'sbah Yazdi, has recruited suicide bombers through an Iranian newspaper, reports the

London-based daily A-Sharq Al-Awsat. Yazdi had done so by publishing an ad in Bartouskhan newspaper, a local paper in the city of Qom...

A-Sharq Al-Awsat's report was based on an interview it conducted with Muhammad Reza Sayari, an Iranian defector who claims he responded to the ad in the paper. According to Sayari, eighty young men were among the first to volunteer to the organization, and to visit Yazdi in his office in Qom. The London-based newspaper further reports, that the volunteers go through training in four camps of Al-Quds Squadron and the Revolutionary Guard. This includes physical training, ideological indoctrination, constructing explosives, code-breaking classes, and learning of foreign languages including Arabic and English.

Revolutionary Guards' commander plans to enlarge suppressive militia

IRIB, July 25 - Increasing Iran's voluntary forces (Basijis) from 10 million to 15, with 9 million men and six million women, is part of the 4th five-year plan of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Speaking to a gathering of 30,000 volunteer female forces, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi said increasing the number of "active volunteer forces" to 4,250,000 persons, increasing the number of "special volunteer forces" to 150,000, expansion of "elite volunteer forces" by 300 percent and establishment or completing 2,285 volunteer forces resistance cells in the country are among special concerns of the IRGC.

Protest in Iran

Police shoot dead two demonstrators in Iran Kurdish town

Iran Focus, July 26 - Protests erupted once again this morning in the Kurdish town of Oshnavieh, northwest Iran, following clashes between angry people and State Security Forces on Monday, during which two anti-government demonstrators were shot dead by police. Monday's demonstration in Oshnavieh, during which participants chanted anti-government slogans, was in support of over 200 people arrested in the nearby towns of Mahabad, Piranshahr, and Marivan, according to local Kurdish websites. Two individuals identified as Heydar Abdollahzadeh and Amr Amini were killed when State Security Forces opened fire on protestors. The killings led to the latest round of street-battles between angry people and agents of the SSF on Tuesday.

Demonstrator shot by soldiers during demonstration in Oshnavieh

DozaMe.org, July 26 - A Kurdish man was killed when Iranian soldiers opened fire on demonstrators on July 25 in the city of Oshnavieh in northwestern Iran, the Kurdish news agency MHA reports. A Kurd named Umer Emini was killed and tens of people were wounded when Iranian soldiers tried to stop the protest which started at 21:30 in support of the uprising in Mahabad. An unknown number of people were arrested. Protests are still raging on in eastern Kurdistan.

More disturbances in Kurdish areas reported

BBC News, July 26 - The Iranian media has reported more disturbances in Kurdish areas of the country after several days of riots. Two people were wounded on Monday when "hooligans" caused disorder...the hard-line newspaper Jomhuri Islami said. But Kurdish journalists report that three people were killed on Monday and seven died in previous days. Kurds are saying the unrest is a sign of frustration over the denial of minority rights in Iran...

Human rights abuse

Tories slam Liberal 'silence' in Kazemi death, demand tough stand with Iran

Canadian Press, July 26 - Critics are calling on Prime Minister Paul Martin's government to take a tougher stand with Iran in the case of a Canadian woman who was tortured and killed in an Iranian prison two years ago. The federal Conservatives and the freedom-of-speech group PEN Canada made the appeal Tuesday - a day after an Iranian court rejected demands for a

new investigation into the case. "A Canadian woman is falsely arrested, tortured, raped and murdered and the Iranian regime won't even investigate," said Stockwell Day, the Tory foreign affairs critic. "And what do we hear from our Government? Only the sounds of silence..."

Rioters detained in southwest Iran, four people shot dead



Al-Jazeera, July 27 - Police have cracked down on fresh protests in Iran's restive southwestern oil province of Khuzistan, home to most of the Islamic Republic's Arab minority. An Iranian official said police had restored order after 12 arrests, but a leader among the Arab protesters said four protesters were killed and many injured in clashes with authorities...

"A certain number of rioters who provoked people, set fire to tires and to a branch of the Saderat Bank," local judiciary official Saeed Saadi was quoted as saying. He added that the situation in the predominantly Arab city close to the Iraqi border had calmed by Tuesday night, although 12 rioters and 18 con men had been arrested over the three previous nights...Mahmoud Ahmad al-Ahwazi, from the Ahwaz Arab People's Democratic-Popular Front, a movement fighting for the independence of Khuzistan, said protests were picking up in the run-up to the 100th-day anniversary of the April unrest...

"Four people have been shot dead by police," he told Reuters by telephone from Britain, where he is based.

Man hanged in Iran's southern port city

Iran Focus, July 27 - An Iranian man was hanged at dawn on Tuesday in a prison in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, the state-run daily Aftab Yazd wrote today...

The paper reported that Farshid also known as Daryoush had been sentenced to receive 74 lashes as well. The death sentence was carried out with the approval of Iran's Supreme Court.

EU condemns Iran's hanging of teenagers

Associated Press, July 26, Brussels, Belgium - The European Union on Tuesday condemned the public hanging last week of two Iranian teenagers who rights activists say were only 16 and 18, and called on Tehran to cease such executions. In 2004, Iran told the EU it would not execute or flog anyone under 18. The EU said Tuesday it hoped "a law abolishing such punishments will be adopted soon," and urged Tehran to respect a moratorium until then. "Capital punishment may not, in any circumstances, be imposed on persons below 18 years of age at the time ... of their crime," the EU statement said.



Feature

A Tipping Point for Tehran

The Wall Street Journal July 27, 2005 Commentary by NIR BOMS and REZA BULORCHI, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's "elected" president, will officially assume his post next month. The elections, no doubt, were a sham and the controversy about voting irregularities is far from settled. Iran's opposition sources revealed that the national ID cards of about five million dead people were provided to regime supporters, enabling them to vote multiple times at multiple locations. So Mr. Ahmadinejad's victory had little to do with the fact that he campaigned as the "populist" son of a blacksmith and hoisted the flag of class warfare against the "wretched rich and corrupt." Instead, his victory can be attributed solely to his loyalty to the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the support of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps' (IRGC) top brass. A former commander of the Qods (Jerusalem) Force in the IRGC -- tasked with the planning and execution of terrorist plots and assassinations abroad -- Mr. Ahmadinejad was catapulted to the presidency by Iran's ultraconservative faction. Even before he has taken office, Mr. Ahmadinejad's presence is already felt in the political circles and the streets of Tehran, showing a policy course that must raise serious concerns on both sides of the Atlantic. In the last three weeks alone, under the banner of a "second" Islamic revolution, the clerical regime has hanged 11 people in public, including two reportedly homosexual teenagers, and sentenced three others to death. The real

story of this election is the metamorphosis of the IRGC from an ideological army to an omnipresent political and military powerhouse. With Mr. Ahmadinejad's victory, the IRGC is now able to spread its wings over all key centers of influence in Iran. This is the most serious power realignment within the ruling theocracy since the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. The first success of the IRGC's resurgence took place during national municipal elections in February 2003, when Mr. Ahmadinejad, leading a conservative block of winning candidates, became the mayor of Tehran. Then, in the February 2004 parliamentary elections, at least 40 former IRGC commanders were elected. Shortly thereafter Mr. Khamenei appointed a top IRGC general as head of Iran's national broadcasting corporation, which runs all radio and television stations in Iran and is the mullahs' primary vehicle for spreading their fundamentalist propaganda at home and to neighboring countries. Currently, the IRGC has full control over Tehran's terror network and has won the admiration of Mr. Khamenei for "running effective intelligence and diplomatic operations" in Iraq. Mr. Khamenei has also put the IRGC in charge of Iran's nuclear program. Last week, Ali Larijani, a former senior IRGC commander, was appointed to replace Hassan Rowhani as the new secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. Also last week Ismail Ahmadi Moghaddam, a top general of the IRGC and the No. 2 in the IRGC-run paramilitary Bassij Force -- the shock troops primarily deployed to crackdown on protesters -- was appointed as Iran's new police chief. The appointment of Mr. Moghaddam, who once said "a country where liberal ideas rule will get nowhere," brings Iran's regular police force under the domination of the IRGC and signals a growing readiness to rein in social and political dissent. Soon after assuming his new post, Mr. Moghaddam called on the security forces to deal "decisively with criminals" and use live bullets if necessary. In recent weeks, the state security forces have already used extreme force to crush political protests -- considered a crime by the mullahs -- throughout the country. And earlier this month, Al-Arabia TV reported that the so-called Global Headquarters for the Commemoration of Islam's Martyrs has recruited nearly 40,000 human "time bombs" ready to carry out "martyrdom operations to liberate Islamic lands." The group bills itself as an NGO but in fact enjoys the full backing of the IRGC -- the top commanders regularly attend its meetings -- and thrived under Mayor Ahmadinejad, who provided their terrorist training centers with access to state resources. It would do even better under President Ahmadinejad. Lastly, and as an opening to next month's nuclear talks with Europe, Iran's Supreme National Security Council, has announced that "even if the West provided us with all economic, political and security incentives, Iran would not drop its nuclear fuel program." In the absence of any feasible chance of success for political engagement or a military action to neutralize the clear and present threats posed by Tehran -- other alternatives must be considered in the Euro- American-Tehran policy equation. Partnering with Iranian people -- and not their tyrant rulers -- would be a good start. A housewife in Tehran told Reuters news agency that she believes an Ahmadinejad presidency would hasten the regime's collapse since there are no "fake reformers" anymore to hide behind. "This is the best result....The moment of real change has just got much closer," she said. This Iranian woman seems to have recognized a possible strategic implication of Mr. Ahmadinejad's presidency that has escaped many Iran observers: Mr. Ahmadinejad's victory may, against his own wishes, help the success of the democracy movement in Iran. In the end, only a regime change in Tehran can ultimately rid Iran and the region of the ayatollahs' menace and the nuclear weapons that may soon be at their disposal. And this is also where EU's policy toward Iran needs to gravitate. It is a security and policy imperative.

Mr. Boms is vice president of the Center for Freedom in the Middle East. Mr. Bulorchi is executive director of the U.S. Alliance for Democratic Iran.